

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA  
Richmond Division**

ASHLEY COX, <i>et al.</i> ,	)	
	)	
Plaintiffs,	)	
	)	
v.	)	Civil Action No. 3:21cv253–HEH
	)	
ELLEN MARIE HESS, in her official	)	
capacity as Commissioner of the Virginia	)	
Employment Commission,	)	
	)	
Defendant.	)	

**ORDER  
(Case Status)**

This matter is before the Court on its own initiative. The Court has continued to monitor the progress of the Virginia Employment Commission’s (“VEC”) efforts to reduce its backlog of unemployment benefits adjudications, improve communication with claimants, and address other ongoing issues with the unemployment claims and appeals process. To that end, the Court commends the VEC on resolving more than 95% of the backlog of claims awaiting adjudication that existed as of May 10, 2021, and on raising the number of claims adjudicated each week to 30,000. However, the Court continues to frequently receive telephone calls from individuals reporting difficulties processing their claims and communicating with the VEC.

In a telephone conference with counsel and VEC representatives on August 25, 2021, the parties provided a status update regarding the VEC’s progress and ongoing issues. While the Court recognizes the significant progress made by the VEC, additional

objectives remain unfulfilled. Accordingly, the parties are hereby DIRECTED to meet and devise a path to resolve the remaining issues and provide the Court with a status report detailing the benchmarks for resolution within thirty (30) days of entry of this Order. Such status report must include the number of first level appeals currently pending before the VEC.

The Clerk is directed to send a copy of this Order to all counsel of record.

It is so ORDERED.



/s/

Henry E. Hudson  
Senior United States District Judge

Date: August 25, 2021  
Richmond, Virginia